



Region One

490 North Meridian Road

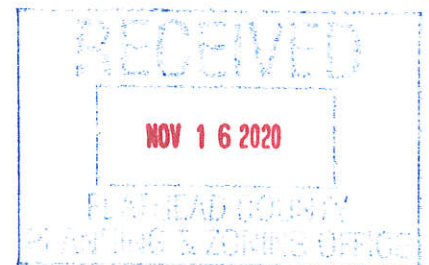
Kalispell, MT 59901

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November 16, 2020

Mark Mussman, CFM  
Director, Flathead County Planning & Zoning  
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**Re: Work Camp zoning text changes**

Dear Mr. Mussman,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide recommended changes to the current zoning text allowing work camps. We at FWP have concerns that the current wording does not address potential wildlife conflicts, particularly human-bear conflicts. Temporary work camps often result in human-bear conflicts due to unsecured food and garbage. We hope that our recommendations will be adopted to ensure the safety of work camp residents and bears.

1. **Food storage, community kitchen facilities, and outdoor cooking and barbequing.** Section 37.111.618 FOOD SERVICE. There are no requirements in this section regarding wildlife attractants and food storage. We recommend the following: If tent housing is provided, then all food and garbage should be stored in a secured building or a bear proof container. A secured shared cooking facility should be provided. If this central cooking area is a soft sided structure, then appropriate bear proof electric fencing should surround the structure. All garbage facilities, including dumpsters should be bear proof. No food should be stored inside of tents, unless the tent is surrounded with appropriate bear-proof electric fencing. Barbeque grills or other outdoor cooking structures should be thoroughly cleaned and grease traps removed after each use.

2. **Garbage.** 37.111.617 SOLID WASTE. There are no requirements in this section for bear proof dumpsters. All garbage should either be stored in a secure building or a bear-proof dumpster or receptacle.
3. **Setbacks from the Flathead River.** Chapter 4. Article J, Section 4, states that work camps must be setback 50 ft from the Flathead River; however, we recommend a total building setback of 300 ft, including a vegetated buffer of 250 ft and additional building setback of 50 ft, from all rivers. For perennial streams, we recommend a total building setback of 200 ft, including a vegetated buffer of 150 ft and an additional building setback of 50 ft. Other water bodies should have a building setback of 130 ft, with a 100 ft vegetated buffer and additional building setback of 30 ft.

If you had any questions regarding my comments, please do not hesitate to contact me via email or phone.

Best regards,

Jessy Coltrane, PhD  
Kalispell Wildlife Biologist

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